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ABSTRACT

For the past three years, case studies have been conducted of a school district's implementation of the California Mentor Teacher Program. For two of the case studies, interview data of mentors and their mentees were distilled into vignettes about how mentors and teachers worked together. At the end of this project, researchers used several research-based vignettes of teachers' interactions with mentor teachers during inservice activities with local mentor teachers, staff developers, and district administrators. The vignettes served as a catalyst to stimulate discussion about issues concerning the new role of mentor teachers. These vignettes were then incorportated into a casebook that integrated research knowledge with practitioner knowledge. These casebooks are part of a larger effort to build and use practitioner knowledge in teaching and teacher education. This report begins with a description of the background of the project and a site description of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUDS) where the data were collected. This is followed by an account of the evolution of the cases and the casebook. The last section discusses how the casebook can be used in teacher training, and in particular, how one school district (LAUSD) is using the casebook for mentor training. (JD)

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CASES AS CATALYSTS FOR CASES

Judith H. Shulman
Joel A. Colbert

Paper presented at the annual meeting
of the American Educational Research Association

Washington, DC, 1987

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CASES AS CATALYSTS FOR CASES

Judith H. Shulman
Joel A. Colbert

This paper will focus on the use of research-based cases to stimulate the writing of personal cases by experienced teachers. Several ethnographers (e.g., Erickson, 1986) have urged that teachers be encouraged to write their own case studies. Yet, short of a full course on qualitative methods, how can a practitioner learn to report personal experience?

During the past three years, the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development has conducted case studies of district implementation of the California Mentor Teacher Program [1]. For two of the case studies, researchers distilled interview data of mentors and the teachers with whom they worked into vignettes about how mentors and teachers worked together (Shulman and Hanson, 1985; Hanson, Shulman and Bird, 1985). This paper will describe how researchers used the researched-based vignettes as catalysts for practicing mentor teachers to write their own accounts. The vignettes were then incorporated into a casebook which integrated research knowledge with practitioner knowledge.

These casebooks are part of a larger effort to build and use practitioner knowledge in teaching and teacher education. While research-based knowledge of the teaching experience has grown in volume and usefulness, practitioner analyses remain a relatively small part of a teacher's information about teaching and learning. The profession has now developed mechanisms to record

and preserve a particular teacher's accumulated knowledge about teaching. When teachers retire or otherwise leave teaching, their understanding, methods, and materials which should form a legacy to the profession, the community, and the school are generally lost. By combining research and practitioner knowledge, the casebooks contribute to the growing body of case literature on the practitioner experience.

One intent for the original project was to examine the role of mentor teachers who were assigned to assist novices. The need for supporting beginning teachers is strongly advocated in the literature (Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Borko, 1986; Sykes, 1983; McLaughlin et al, 1986; Brooks, 1987). Yet the role of mentor teacher in California, where mentors receive a $4000 stipend, is relatively unprecedented in the history of schools. The new reform introduced status differences in the teaching profession, heretofore considered egalitarian (Bird, 1986). Our questions in that first project included: How do the status differences affect mentors' practices in their new role? What are mentors strategies for helping neophytes? How do mentor teachers describe successful and unsuccessful relationships with these teachers? How does the mentorship affect relationship with other colleagues?

This paper will not specifically address the above questions. (See Shulman, 1987, for a more detailed account). Rather, it is a story about how we grappled with the concept and development of cases and casebooks that could incorporate and extend what we had learned in our earlier case studies. Before

we began the project, we had seen cases from the business school (e.g., Merry, 1967), but we had no models of cases or casebooks from education. Our task was to develop a prototype of a casebook that combined vignettes written by experienced teachers with theoretical knowledge.

What is a case? Lee Shulman suggests that a case is not simply the report of an event or incident (L. Shulman, 1986). "To call something a case is to make a theoretical claim -- to argue that it is a 'case of something,' or to argue that it is an instance of a larger class." A case of direct observation and coaching is likewise a theoretical assertion. Thus, he argues, the power of using case literature in teacher training is to illuminate both the theoretical and the practical.

Shulman proposes three types of cases. "Prototypes" exemplify theoretical principles. "Precedents" capture and communicate principles of practice or maxims. "Parables" convey norms or values. I will argue that the cases presented in this paper can accomplish one or more of these functions.

This paper begins with a description of the background of the project and a site description where the data were collected. This is followed by an account of the evolution of the cases and the casebook. The last section discusses how the casebook can be used in teacher training, and in particular, how one school district is using the casebook for mentor training.

Background

In Fall, 1985, the Far West Laboratory began a cooperative effort with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) on

effective support for beginning teachers. Their work focused on improving inservice training for the district's mentor teachers who where responsible to assist novice teachers. One project involved the development of The Mentor Teacher Casebook (Shulman and Colbert, 1986), which included selected vignettes written by mentor teachers. The casebook was perceived by the authors as a way of helping mentors leave a legacy about their work, and by the researchers as an opportunity to introduce a new function in the emerging role of lead teachers.

The casebook draws from Far West Laboratory's (FWL) two-year study of first year implementation of the California Mentor Teacher Program [1]. At the end of this project, researchers used several researched-based vignettes of teachers' interactions with mentor teachers during inservice activities with local mentor teachers, staff developers and district administrators. To our delight, the vignettes served as a powerful catalyst to stimulate discussion about issues concerning the new role of mentor teachers. Participants in the workshops reacted to the vignettes, shared personal experiences, discussed common problems, and deliberated about new ways of asserting the mentorship. Reacting to stories about other mentors' experiences made it easier for some participants to talk about their own. As one mentor coordinator said, "The vignettes stimulated our staff to discuss issues that were heretofore buried under the table."

This experience guided the planning of a new project -- a casebook from the mentor teachers' perspective, using vignettes written by mentors themselves (Shulman and Colbert, 1986). We felt that given proper preparation and support, we could provide

the opportunity for experienced teachers to contribute to the growing case literature on teaching, heretofore dominated by researchers.

Site Description

LAUSD was a compelling collaborator for several reasons. One is the sheer magnitude and diversity of the district. As the second largest school district in the United States, it has over 27,000 teachers and enrolls over 570,000 students. To fill the growing number of empty classrooms, the district has hired over 2500 new teachers during each of the past two years and expects to hire more in the near future. Approximately 50 per cent of these novices have a bachelor's degree but no previous teacher preparation. The majority participate in a "joint venture" with a cooperating university and simultaneously work towards their teaching credential. About five per cent are secondary teachers, enrolled in the district's teacher trainee preparation program [2].

In 1985-86 LAUSD selected over 900 mentor teachers based on paper screening, personal references, interviews, and classroom observations. Their primary responsibility was to assist teacher trainees in grades 7-12 and new and inexperienced teachers at all grade levels. Each mentor was assigned to a group of novices within a particular geographical region. But first, all mentors completed a 30-hour series of training workshops that were somewhat broad in focus. Effective instruction, cooperative learning models, content instruction,

and classroom observation strategies were among the workshop topics.

Authors of the cases. The authors were active mentor teachers in LAUSD. These mentors were assigned to assist from three to 14 new teachers. They were all interested in improving their skills as mentor teachers.

Data Collection

The data take the form of narrative vignettes, written by practicing mentor teachers, about an event or series of events. The vignettes describe the circumstances of each event, its consequences, and the ongoing thoughts and feelings of the participants. Unlike case studies, which are analytical documents written by outside observers or researchers, these vignettes are brief accounts (ranging from two paragraphs to a page and a half) about the challenges, successes, and failures that mentors face as they attempt to assert their new roles as mentor teachers. Some of the vignettes are accompanied by reactions from other mentors. The reactions give a multiple perspective of the situation described.

Vignettes were collected from 22 mentor teachers who were participating in a master's degree program designed specifically for mentor teachers through California State University, Los Angeles. They were all enrolled in a course in staff development taught by Joel Colbert. The vignettes were written as part of a course requirement over a six week period. Each mentor was assigned five vignettes. Several mentors wrote additional vignettes, for a total of 140. Judith Shulman was

present during the first and last class of data collection.

The strategy for data collection was collaborative; we wanted the mentors' input in determining what were the important issues of the mentoring process. During the first class, we described the project to participating mentor teachers. As a strategy to motivate commitment to the project, we distributed two researched-based vignettes from a previous study (Shulman and Hanson, 1985), one at a time, and asked the participants to react to them. We were not disappointed. A lengthy discussion of personal experiences ensued, and our collaborators realized the power and contribution that personal writings can provide. They appeared enthusiastic about being published and leaving a legacy from which other mentors could learn. After discussing in detail the form of a vignette, we assigned two for the next class: one illustrating a successful relationship with beginning teacher, and a second about an attempt that was less successful. We believed that this assignment would provide a baseline from which to begin to understand the complexities of assisting an assigned neophyte.

In the next class, the participants presented their accounts to the class and received reactions from their colleagues. The discussions were always constructive and provided the basis for an identity group (Bird, 1986). As one member said, "This was the best staff development that I have had since I became a mentor teacher." Toward the end of the session, the participants generated a list of common issues described, which included the following:

* establishing a working relationship with an assigned teacher

* relationships with colleagues (e.g., resentment, the "expert syndrome")

* mentor/administrator relationship (e.g., roles and responsibilities)

* confidentiality/ evaluation

* dealing with emotions

* appropriate mentor/teacher match

The mentors were asked to select one of the issues to write about for the next class.

Each of the following sessions took a similar format. Periodically, the teachers were asked to write a reaction to selected vignettes, so as to generate multiple perspectives on the situation described. In succeeding assignments, mentors were also asked to respond to the instructor's general clarifying questions, so they would provide the richness that we sought in their writing.

The mentors requested an additional topic toward the end of the data collection. They wanted to write about what it feels like to be a mentor -- the rewards of helping appreciative novices and experiencing their own professional growth as well as the frustrations that accompanied their higher status. These included hostility and jealousy from a small group of colleagues, a sense of helplessness from working with teachers who continued poor teaching practices, and exhaustion from working extra hours.

We also discussed how each mentor would be recognized in the casebook. The publication of teachers' writings typically produce a tension between the protection afforded by anonymity

and the credit earned through authorship. Though the mentors were enthusiastic about being published, they preferred not to have their names be associated with specific vignettes. We resolved this dilemma by listing the contributors alphabetically on the title page, but leaving unattributed the authorship of each vignette.

Data Analysis: Analyzing and Grouping the Vignettes.

Analysis of the data consisted of multiple stages. During the first stage, an elaborate coding system was developed to describe mentors' activities in each vignette. Vignettes were grouped around five proposed themes: positive relationship, negative relationship, gaining entry, mentor-principal relationship, and the life of a mentor. These themes changed several times during succeeding stages of the analysis.

During the second stage, we again examined each account to select vignettes for the casebook. At this point, the vignettes began to assume the character of cases. A case is not merely an anecdote or story, but rather a case of something that is represented by a larger category (L. Shulman, 1986). Vignettes were selected based on a combination of factors: the situation described, general appeal of the account, the meaning or principles associated with the account, its contribution to our understanding of mentor issues, and an attempt to include at least one vignette from each member of the class. We tended to choose those vignettes that included reactions from other mentor teachers, because the multiple perspectives added richness to the situations described.

As each vignette was selected, we continued to ask ourselves, "What is this a case of?" and noted the principle(s) and/or questions raised that were illustrated in the account [3]. At times this conception changed as we experimented with different category systems.

The theoretical framework guiding our analysis stemmed from the work on coaching (Showers, 1984; J. Shulman, 1986; Goldsbury, 1986; Zumwalt, 1986; Goldhammer et al, 1980; Wildman and Borko, 1985) and the principles of advising (Little, 1986; Little et al, 1984). During this stage, we realized that our initial five themes for the project were not useful. Three of the themes (successful and less successful relationships, and establishing the working relationship) appeared to be a part of the larger literature on coaching. We were plagued with questions. Why were some mentors more successful in working with teachers than others? Which vignettes illuminated principles of coaching and which related to other themes?

As a result of frequent sweeps through the vignettes, which had by then assumed the character of cases, and checks for confirming and disconfirming evidence, we created four new sections: establishing the working relationship, individual consultation, observation and coaching, and modeling. These sections were later grouped into a chapter called "The Process of Mentoring." (See Appendix A for an example of a case in this chapter.)

The same process was used to create two other chapters, "Mentors and Administrators" and "The Life of a Mentor." In the case of the former, we found that the original theme, "mentor-

principal relationship", was too narrow. We looked for a broader range of instances that could provide input to administrators, in both planning mentor programs and using the mentorship appropriately. Some cases described how principals supported mentors' work by respecting the groundrule of confidentiality, while others compromised the mentor/protege relationship by divulging sensitive information. (See Appendix B for an example of a case.) Another group of cases illustrated the importance of an appropriate match of mentors and novices, by grade level and subject area. For example, some mentors were assigned to teachers in different subject areas, thus limiting their capacity to act as credible resources. Others extolled the virtues of being assigned to teachers who taught the same subject or the same grade level. Finally, two cases suggested the value of frequent contact and continued support for new teachers.

While assigning mentor teachers to novices, administrators must consider both subject specialty and grade level as well as proximal support as guidelines to their decisions. Lack of attention to either can seriously hinder a mentor's capacity to provide assistance.

The final chapter, suggested by the mentor teachers, examines the rewards and frustrations of being mentor teachers. Bird's discussion of how status differences affect mentor's practices in their new role (1986) was helpful in this analysis. The cases also describe the vulnerability of new mentors as well as the tradeoffs that some mentors faced -- increased professional development versus compromised personal relationships.

(See Appendix C for an example of a case that poignantly describes these tradeoffs.)

Development of a Casebook

After analyzing the vignettes, characterizing them as cases, and grouping them into chapters and sections, we were faced with the problem of how to incorporate them into a casebook. How should we sequence the cases in each section so as to illustrate the principals and precedents described? How should we integrate relevant research literature? How much commentary should we include about the mentor role and each case? How could we make the casebook useful for staff developers?

We decided that each chapter would contain four parts:

* introductory commentary about issues and questions raised by the cases, both for the chapter and sections within the chapter;
* the cases, grouped by themes;
* sample discussion questions for each case; and
* an annotated bibliography.

Potential Uses of The Casebook

The mentors who worked on this collaborative project have uniformly praised using the case method in staff development. They note that writing the vignettes helped them to reflect on their practices with new teachers and raised their consciousness about the dimensions of the mentor's role. Equally important to the mentors was the opportunity to share experiences and concerns with their colleagues and to learn alternative ways of handling diverse situations. Each case became a potential precedent for future action. The mentors learned that they were not alone,

that their experiences were not unique instances. The following are representative comments from mentors who helped to write this casebook.

> The vignette experience has been a powerful one. I have had the opportunity to reflect upon myself and my work. I feel that the experience would not have been as meaningful, however, if it had not been coupled with the classroom sharing sessions. Not only did I need to write about my own experiences, I also needed to hear about others as well...I realized that I was not alone. The sharing sessions provided some insight into how to deal with problem mentees.
>
> Writing about my experiences as a mentor has caused me to focus on the individuals I deal with in terms of their uniqueness as people, and not just as new teachers...The writing forced me to slow down from the hectic pace of doing the job and to reflect on how I was doing it.
>
> Writing mentor experiences has been valuable because it has made me reflect on what went on and how I perceived the experiences I had. It made me change some strategies and focus on others. Sharing has been valuable because we learn from others and we can find out that we are not the only ones going through the experience. Sharing them has given us other viewpoints and approaches.
>
> When you write about something, you have an opportunity to analyze it. It [writing vignettes] has raised my consciousness level to plan for my observations just as I plan my lessons for my class...The discussions have given me insights into other ways of handling problems. I feel I am] more tuned into my responsibilities as a mentor.

The Human Resources Branch of the Los Angeles Unified School District has incorporated the use of case material in a number of activities. For example, as a staff development tool, writing, presenting, discussing, and reacting to vignettes was integrated into university coursework for mentor teachers. Individual cases were also employed in inservice activities for new and experienced mentors. These were particularly effective in

stimulating discussion during workshops on methods of classroom observation and coaching.

The Human Resources Branch is also using selected cases during administrator training. Since the mentor role is new in Los Angeles, and principals and mentors are expected to work together, both groups need to understand one another's needs. Cases provide opportunities for administrators to study and discuss the mentors' roles and responsibilities. Mentor teachers and administrators may also discuss the cases together as they begin to grapple with issues of shared leadership.

Broadening the utility. Though this casebook was intended for training new and experienced mentor teachers, others may also find it valuable.

* Administrators and policy makers can understand the complexity of the new reform from the perspective of the participants themselves.

* Teacher educators can see the relationship between mentoring new teachers and supervising student teachers. The difficulties of establishing a working relationship and coaching neophytes are inherent in both kinds of activities.

* Teachers and teacher educators may be stimulated to write cases about their work so that they can learn from each other.

Conclusion

The Mentor Teacher Casebook represents Far West Laboratory's first attempt to develop case material written by experienced teachers. Research-based vignettes were used to stimulate the development of new vignettes. The casebook was directed primarily at school personnel -- mentor teachers, staff developers, and administrators. Initial pilot testing of the

cases in inservice activities suggest that these vignettes stimulate discussion of mentor issues and reflection on personal practices. The vignettes also serve as potential precedents for future action.

In contrast to professions like law, medicine, and social work, a teachers' own account of teaching has no official place in the discourse of schooling. We hope that this casebook will stimulate both teachers and teacher educators to write their own personal accounts of their experiences. With the development of a professional case literature, educators will finally have the tools they need to learn from one another.

ENDNOTES

1. The California Mentor Teacher Program is funded by the state's Hart-Hughes Education Reform Act of 1983 (SB 813). This legislation, in effect as of January 1, 1984, is intended to reward and retain excellent teachers and to contribute to school improvement. The statute allocates funds to participating districts on a formula basis, allowing $4000 stipends for district-desnigated mentors, and $2000 per mentor for district implementation. The mentors' primary role is to guide and assist new teachers; they may also guide and assist more experienced teachers and develop special curricula. The statute leaves considerable latitude for California's diverse school districts to design their own programs.

2. The teacher trainee program is an alternative teacher credentialing program under the auspices of a school district. In establishing a trainee program, school districts must (a) verify to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing that fully credentialed teachers are not available; (b) create and implement a professional development plan for teacher trainees with provision for annual evaluation, a description of courses to be taken, and a plan for the completion of all preservice activities; (c) consult with an accredited institution of higher education that has a state approved program of professional preparation; and (d) require that each teacher trainee be assisted and guided by a certificated employee of the school district who has been designated as a mentor teacher (Oliver & McKibben, 1985).

3. Wilson and Gudmundsdottir (1986) described the evolution of their conception of a case for the "Knowledge Growth in Teaching Teaching" project at Stanford University. They answered, "What is a case of?" in different ways, corresponding to different stages of data collection. Each new interpretation of an experience contributed to the development of a gradually emerging conceptual framework.

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APPENDIX A

Be Prepared: The Problem May Be Bigger Than You Think!

I am not yet a seasoned mentor, and Jane is not a young, new teacher. She is a second year probationary teacher who came to our school from an unsuccessful year at a junior high. She is a tiny woman, quite shy and soft spoken, a recent immigrant from an Eastern European country. Her biggest problem seemed to be class management: how to keep the students in their seats and on task for a significant portion of class time. I was expected to help her solve the problem and show significant improvement.

My first observation began normally with a pre-observation conference in which she asked me to pay attention to behavior problems. The lesson would be concerned with basic math and seemed well-planned. Jane seemed quite composed when she talked about the behavior problems she was experiencing and explained that the class I would visit was her worst problem.

I was a few minutes early in arriving for the observation. A short chat and the decision on where she wanted me to sit brought us close to the tardy bell. I was curious to note there were still only four students present. At the ringing of the bell none of the four were in their seats; there was confusion at both doors with students walking in, walking out, talking, and milling around. Jane was writing on the board. The confusion in the room seemingly went unnoticed. Two minutes after the bell she went to her desk and picked up the roll book. There were now about twenty students in the room but only three were in their seats. Jane began asking individuals to sit down. On two occasions students who had taken seats got up again, one to go to the pencil sharpener, the other to cross the room and speak to another student. Ten minutes into the period all the students were in their seats, but few were quiet or paying attention.

Over the noise of conversation Jane announced what the lesson was and proceeded to work a sample problem on the board. Very few students were even facing the board, let alone paying attention to what was written on it. After five minutes of explaining sample problems, she passed out a ditto problem sheet without explanation and proceeded to help individuals at their desks. Fewer than ten percent of the class were on task at a single time, and they were always the students in the immediate proximity of the teacher.

The class continued the remaining time in much the same pattern. The anecdotal record was difficult to write as there were so many things going on at the same time. Students came and went from the room many times. Rude remarks were constant. I had written seven pages when the bell rang and the class charged the door. Since lunch was next, and the situation seemed so out of control, I decided to attempt some debriefing right then.

We sat down together, and the only thing to come to my mind was to ask her about the class period. She replied that she wasn't very happy with it; she exclaimed, "What am I to do?" and burst into tears. I mentally tossed out the seven pages of anecdotal records and attempted to be personally supportive. Even though we got through the tears, and I helped her understand that she could change for the better many of the problems she was having, I was not happy with the outcome. We set a date for the next day to go over my notes and went to lunch.

The next meeting was not emotionally charged but was strained. She seemed uncomfortable, and I struggled to identify one single thing which needed to be done to "settle things down." We agreed that the beginning of the class must be more orderly, and she vowed to begin working on the tardy problem.

I am having many problems juggling personal empathy, collegiality, and professional help in this case. I am prone to think I became too emotionally involved from the beginning. I certainly am concerned for my ego if I am unsuccessful and Jane loses her job.

Reaction

My immediate reaction to "Be Prepared" is, "Yes, some problems may be bigger than you are." Jane has many management problems, some can be corrected, some probably cannot be changed. The need to recognize our own limitations is just as important for the mentor as is recognizing Jane's. The need to help, the desire to do well affects mentors strongly. Realizing, though, that mentors cannot solve all problems and cannot create teachers from raw clay is mandatory for mentor teachers.

The job of mentor must be one of helping, advising, being supportive, and guiding when we can. The role must not become, even in the mentor's deepest thoughts, one of solving all problems for all people. Some teachers will fail no matter what the mentor does, and they must be allowed to do so. Fear for one's ego if a teacher does not improve places a hugh emotional burden on the mentor. Let Jane take the "baby steps" and guide but don't accept her emotional load as well. Her failure is not necessarily yours.

Reaction

My initial reaction to "Be Prepared" is that Jane is academically prepared but needs much guidance in working effectively with this particular group. The mentor has to help her; she has to put her personal feelings aside and get to the root of the problem. Jane needs strict guidelines to follow. A suggestion would be to provide those guidelines in the form of written "techniques to try." She might not find this threatening, and this could alleviate some of the mentor's feeling of betrayal. The following suggestions may be appropriate:

- The tardy problem: The class should be made aware of the fact that the door will be locked immediately after the late bell. It would then be necessary for students to go to the office for an admittance slip.

- Disruptive behavior: Some of the problems might be eliminated if Jane has the work on the chalkboard prior to the students' arrival. She should never turn her back on that class to write on the blackboard.

- Mentor relieving mentee for a short period: The mentor has experience in resolving conflicts and reducing discipline problems. He should talk to the class regarding school and class rules. (He has a responsibility to all students in the school, not just the students in his class.) The mentor should make himself visible in that room as often as he can.

There is nothing wrong in being emotionally or personally involved. Jane needs that kind of support as much as she needs professional expertise. However, if she fails, it is not the mentor's fault.

The problem is bigger than Jane. It takes an assertive person with a variety of experiences with students of different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds to manage effectively a situation like the one in Jane's room. Doing all she can do to help, her ego should stay intact. She has not failed.

APPENDIX B

Shattered

George was a first year teacher on an emergency credential. He was a music major and had no working experience with children. He began the school year as a kindergarten teacher. He was teamed up with another emergency credentialed teacher, who also had never worked with children.

The year began very shakily for George. Both he and his room partner were having personality conflicts. In addition, neither one was able to share any expertise for professional growth. It was the blind leading the blind. George continued to have problems. Finally the principal transfered both teachers to other classrooms. George continued working in kindergarten, but continued to have problems with classroom management. I worked with George very closely, planning, observing, sharing materials, and demonstrating various lessons with him. The principal stulled [evaluated] George for the first time and gave him an unsatisfactory stull evaluation. She was very displeased with his work.

She called me to her office, and asked how he was progressing. I told her that that information was confidential; she apologized for asking. She knew George was scheduled to observe my class on a Tuesday and asked how long he observed. I told her that he did not show up for the observation. She was furious!

The next day she called us both into her office. She had written an unsatisfactory memorandum to George. In this memorandum, she used my name in a way to prove his incompetency.

As you can probably imagine, I was shocked and disappointed. She had broken a confidence that I had built with my mentee. He was shattered to say the least. He asked me if I was working with him or against him. Problems escalated and I was eventually released from this assignment due to conflict of interest of the principal and new teacher.

Words cannot express how disappointed I was with how this principal dealt with this new teacher. Granted he had problems and was working hard to improve his weaknesses, but her treatment of this situation was highly insensitive and unprofessional.

APPENDIX C

What Happens to Mentor Teachers?

As soon as my name appeared on the spotlight that I was a new mentor teacher for the school, I started receiving many negative comments.

Every time Mr. Alex Complain would see me, he would rub it in. He'd say things like the following:

"You got $4000.00 more a year. . . . Why don't you take me out to dinner?" (He's married with two children.)

"You have sub days for someone to cover your class! You really have it made."

Seeing my new briefcase I purchased at California State University, Los Angeles on sale, "Oh, I see you are now making progress in life . . . an expensive leather briefcase."

"My . . . my . . . you now get as much money as a vice-principal."

"I can't talk to you anymore; you're no longer one of us. You're a mentor teacher."

Comments like these would make me feel uncomfortable. But I'd try to ignore them and not get upset. It would bother me as I remember telling my husband Mr. Complain's latest comment about me being a mentor teacher. Luckily, he wasn't my mentee so I didn't have to deal with him that closely. Eventually, about four or five months later, he stopped making this type of comment. Maybe he got tired. I just ignored him so he just stopped bothering me.

The ESL Coordinator and another ESL teacher also made negative comments. Their comments weren't as frequent. Some of their comments were the following:

"You are out of the classroom <u>again</u>?"

"You can really take it easy now -- just call someone to sub for you and take the time off out of mentor funds."

"You're a mentor teacher, and you can afford to go."

"Now that you are $4000.00 richer, you don't need to sub during your off-track time."

Positive feelings were derived from the administration. It seemed that now I had moved up a rank higher than the regular teacher. It seemed that now I could be trusted more with information about teachers that were having a difficult time teaching.

I felt privileged to hear some of the problems they were having with some teachers. Being a mentor teacher allowed me to do staff inservices and to be thanked in public for having done a good job. Many times I was asked to mentor some teachers that were not assigned to me.

My students were also affected by my being a mentor teacher. They suffered and missed me whenever I was out mentoring. I always tried to get the same substitute, but it still was not the same. Many times my directions were not followed, and my students got behind, or they were just not taught properly. It hurt me because I consider my students as my own, and like a mother, no one can take my place. Even though I did have substitute days and substitute hours, I tried not to be out if it wasn't absolutely necessary. I teach English as a second language in a junior high school.

My family was also affected. After working every hour at school, by the time I got home, I was exhausted. Sometimes I had a difficult time sleeping because I had so many things on my mind, important things that needed to be done. And then there is the mentor log that needs to be turned in . . . I haven't done it yet . . . not enough time.